

NEWS ALERT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

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Assessment of New Castle County storm damage Oct. 13

Local, state and federal teams seek information for a federal disaster declaration

Starting Wednesday, Oct. 13, damage assessment teams including local, state and federal emergency management officials will tour New Castle County areas that received the greatest impact on Sept. 28 and 29. This assessment effort is taken in response to damage caused by a tornado and severe flooding and other powerful winds during last month's storm.

Officials from the Federal Emergency Management Agency, Delaware Emergency Management Agency, New Castle County Office of Emergency Preparedness and other state agencies will assess damages to public facilities, residences and businesses. Those who have not reported damages to the New Castle County Helpline, (302)395-5555, are encouraged to do so immediately. Those in the City of Wilmington should report storm-related damage to the Wilmington Office of Emergency Management, (302)576-2489.

Members of these assessment teams do not act as structural inspectors. They are gathering information in order to compile a monetary total of storm-related damages. The estimated cost of repair or replacement of damaged structures, roads and bridges and equipment is needed to determine if Delaware is eligible for a Federal disaster declaration.

Many areas that suffered major damage are known to officials, however, the assessment teams want to avoid overlooking isolated pockets of destruction and areas that have not been previously reported. Even property owners that have insurance coverage for their losses are asked to report their damage so the total impact on the entire area can be accurately compiled.

Glenn Gillespie, DEMA Deputy Director and Coordinating Officer for the assessment teams, said it is very important for everyone to report whatever amount of damage was sustained on their properties or on those that house their businesses or organizations. He said, whenever possible, members of the assessment teams would take information directly from those who live or work in structures that suffered damage.

"The state is a little better than half way toward what we need in monetary damages to be eligible for a Presidential Declaration," he said. "We know there are people out there who have damage that is not reported. They might be hesitant to report, or think that it is not significant enough, but we need to know about as much as possible. If we get a national disaster declaration, we can help people get the assistance that they need."

Following the tornado and flooding, Gov. Ruth Ann Minner declared a State of Emergency for northern New Castle County in an effort to further the chances of receiving federal aid for those affected by the storm.

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